

South Dakota and then as my party's nominee for President, my four daughters ganged up on my one night. "Dad, why don't you give up this battle? You've been speaking out against this crazy war since we were little kids. When you won the Democratic presidential nomination, you got snowed under by President Nixon." In reply I said, "Just remember that sometimes in history even a tragic mistake produces something good. The good about Vietnam is that it is such a terrible blunder, we'll never go down that road again." Mr. President, we're going down that road again. So, what do I tell my daughters? And what do you tell your daughters?

Mr. President, I do not speak either as a pacifist or a draft dodger. I speak as one who after the attack on Pearl Harbor, volunteered at the age of nineteen for the Army Air Corps and flew 35 missions as a B-24 bomber. I believed in that war then and I still do 65 years later. And so did the rest of America. Mr. President, are you missing the intellectual and moral capacity to know the difference between a justified war and a war of folly in Vietnam or Iraq?

Public opinion polls indicate that two-thirds of the American people think that the war in Iraq has been a mistake on your part. It is widely believed that this war was the central reason Democrats captured control of both houses of Congress. Polls among the people of Iraq indicate that nearly all Iraqis want our military presence in their country for the last four years to end now. Why do you persist in defying public opinion in both the United States and Iraq and throughout the other countries around the globe? Do you see yourself as omniscient? What is your view of the doctrine of self-determination, which we Americans hold dear?

And wonder of wonders, Mr. President, after such needless death and destruction, first in the Vietnamese jungle and now in the Arabian desert, how can you order 21,500 more American troops to Iraq? Are you aware that as the war in Vietnam went from bad to worse, our leaders sent in more troops and wasted more billions of dollars until we had 550,000 U.S. troops in that little country? It makes me shudder as an aging bomber pilot to remember that we dropped more bombs on the Vietnamese and their country than the total of all the bombs dropped by all the air forces around the world in World War II. Do you, Mr. President, honestly believe that we need tens of thousands of additional troops plus a supplemental military appropriation of 200 billion dollars before we can bring our troops home from this nightmare in ancient Baghdad?

In your initial campaign for the Presidency, Mr. Bush, you described yourself as a "compassionate conservative." What is compassionate about consigning America's youth to a needless and seemingly endless war that has now lasted longer than World War II? And what is conservative about reducing the taxes needed to finance this war and instead running our national debt to nine trillion dollars with money borrowed from China, Japan, Germany and Britain? Is this wild deficit financing your idea of conservatism? Mr. President, how can a true conservative be indifferent to the steadily rising cost of a war that claims over seven billion dollars a month, 237 million dollars every day? Are you troubled to know as a conservative that just the interest on our skyrocketing national debt is \$760,000 every day? Mr. President, our Nobel Prize winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz, estimates that if the war were to continue until 2010 as you have indicated it might, the cost would be over a trillion dollars.

Perhaps, Mr. President, you should ponder the words of a genuine conservative—England's 19th Century member of Parliament,

Edmund Burke: "A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood."

And, Mr. President at a time when your most respected generals have concluded that the chaos and conflict in Iraq cannot be resolved by more American dollars and more American young bodies, do you ever consider the needs here at home of our own anxious and troubled society? What about the words of another true conservative, General and President Dwight Eisenhower who said that, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed."

And, Mr. President, would not you and all the rest of us do well to ponder the farewell words of President Eisenhower: "In the councils of government; we must guard against the acquisition of the unwarranted influence of the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

Finally, Mr. President, I ask have you kept your oath of office to uphold the Constitution when you use what you call the war on terrorism to undermine the Bill of Rights? On what constitutional theory do you seize and imprison suspects without charge, sometimes torturing them in foreign jails? On what constitutional or legal basis have you tapped the phones of Americans without approval of the courts as required by law? Are you above the Constitution, above the law, and above the Geneva accords? If we are fighting for freedom in Iraq as you say, why are you so indifferent to protecting liberty here in America?

Many Americans are now saying in effect, "The American war in Iraq has created a horrible mess but how can we now walk away from it?" William Polk, a former Harvard and University of Chicago professor of Middle East Studies and a former State Department expert on the Middle East, has teamed up with me on a recent book requested by Simon and Schuster. It is entitled, "Out of Iraq: A Practical Plan for Withdrawal Now." I feel awkward praising it, so I give you the respected journalist of the New York Times, and now of Newsweek, Anna Quindlen who told Charlie Rose on his excellent TV program: "There is a wonderful book I am recommending to everyone. It's a very small, readable book by George McGovern and William Polk called "Out of Iraq". And it just very quickly runs you through the history of the country, the makeup of the country, how we got in, the arguments for getting in—many of which don't withstand scrutiny—and how we can get out. It's like a little primer. I think the entire nation should read it and then we will be united."

If you need a second for the judgment of Anna Quindlen, I give you the esteemed Library Journal: "In this crisp and cogently argued book, former Senator McGovern and scholar Polk offer a trenchant and straightforward critique of the war in Iraq. What makes their highly readable book unique is that it not only argues why the United States needs to disengage militarily from Iraq now . . . but also clearly delineates practical steps for troop withdrawal . . . Essential reading for anybody who wants to cut through the maze of confusion that surrounds current U.S. policy in Iraq, this book is highly recommended for public and academic libraries."

Professor Polk is a descendant of President Polk and the brother of the noted George Polk, is here today from his home in southern France and he will join me at the podium as I conclude this impartial interrogation of President Bush. And now, members of the National Press Club and your guests, it's your turn to cross-examine Bill Polk and me in, of course, an equally impartial manner.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, February 8, 2007, I was attending the funeral of the father of a member of my staff and missed rollcall votes No. 81–92. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes No. 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90 and "aye" on final passage of H.R. 547, the Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act (rollcall vote No. 92). I would have voted "nay" on rollcall votes No. 84 and 91.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for rollcall vote No. 85, on agreeing to the Rogers amendment to H.R. 547, at 4:01 p.m. on February 8, 2007.

If present, I would have voted "aye."

RECOGNIZING DR. STEVEN SCOTT FOR HIS WORK ON BEHALF OF AMERICA'S VETERANS

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Steven G. Scott, a nominee for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Employee of the Year Award, issued annually by the Disabled American Veterans. As someone who had dedicated their professional career to meeting the healthcare needs of his patients, Dr. Scott deserves recognition for his work on behalf of our nation's veterans.

While stationed at the James A. Haley VA Medical Center in Tampa, Florida for the past sixteen years, Dr. Scott has been instrumental in bringing specialized healthcare to soldiers with traumatic injuries. His work has focused on providing care for those individuals wounded through explosions, as well as those afflicted with spinal cord injuries.

Without Dr. Scott's tireless efforts, these soldiers would not have access to the high quality care they receive today. I have toured the facilities at Haley in person, and can attest to the outstanding facilities, excellent staff, and professional atmosphere. Dr. Scott deserves a great deal of the credit for the quality care provided to the severely wounded at Haley. Families around the country request the Haley Center because of the superior healthcare services Dr. Scott has brought to the Polytrauma Center.

Dr. Scott has also been recognized for his outstanding work serving veterans injured in combat. The 2006 recipient of the Tampa Bay Business Journal's Health Care Heroes Award